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HOMEMAKERS' CHAT

Saturday, February 4, 1939

(FOR BROADCAST USE ONLY)

SUBJECT: "AN INSIDE STORY." Information from the Bureau of Home Economics, U.S.D.A.

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Let's talk about linings today, listeners. Let's talk about coat linings because they're such a bugbear to home dressmakers. At least that's what a good many housewives tell me. One friend of mine even says she'd rather go around wearing a coat with a torn and ragged lining than try to put in a new one. She relined a coat once and she says it looked worse than the old lining. Yet she's generally pretty clever with her needle--makes a lot of dresses for herself and her children.

Well, it's too bad that linings so often wear out before the coat does. They wouldn't if they were of the right fabric and were properly cut and fitted. But a good many ready-made coats have linings of silk that is heavily weighted or linings of rayon fabric that shifts or pulls at the seams. Pure-dye silk, you know, is more expensive than weighted silk. It lasts far longer, but it costs more. If you are relining a coat, the cost of pure-dye silk may not be worthwhile. But you can get good rayon fabrics that won't shift or pull, and that will make an inexpensive and serviceable lining.

But there. That's another story. What I started to say was that at this time of year, many linings are on their last legs, so to speak. And a good many women don't try to put in new linings because they don't know how. If you can line a coat yourself, that's all to the good of your wardrobe and your pocketbook. And believe it or not, linings aren't so difficult--if you know a few secrets.

To do a good job, you need plenty of pins and patience as well as the old lining to use as a pattern, an iron and ironing board to press as you go, and if possible a dress dummy or a willing husband to wear the coat while you pin the lining in.

No matter how tattered and torn the old lining may be, it is precious. Remove it with care and press it with care, because it makes the best possible pattern from which to cut the new lining.

Now for the secrets of putting in a lining. One is to turn the coat inside out before you fit, pin and sew in the new lining. The lining always corresponds to the coat. You make darts in it to correspond to darts in the coat, and put in pleats wherever the coat has pleats.

Another secret is to sew in the lining piece by piece rather than altogether. And the order of sewing in these pieces is: first, back; second, front; third, sleeves.

Still another secret is the way you attach the lining to the coat. Attach it first to the side seams then the armhole seam. Work out to the shoulders, and

front and neck edges last. Then follow with the sleeves. That makes the lining fit better, and keeps it from pulling in one place and sagging in another.

Let's suppose now that you are about to reline your winter coat to keep it looking nice until spring. Let's just describe the process, step by step, so you'll know exactly how to go at it.

First, of course, you rip out the old lining, ever so carefully. As you rip, notice how the lining was attached. Notice especially where it was tacked and where a hand-fell was used. When you have the old lining out, press each piece flat, being careful not to pull or stretch any of its curved edges. Now lay the pieces on your new fabric. Be sure to lay them on the straight of the goods. Cut around the edges carefully.

The lining pieces are now ready to go in the coat. Get the coat ready for the lining by turning it inside out and putting it on a dress form, if you have one, or on your husband, if he's somewhere near your size and willing to oblige. Sometimes you see a woman stitch all the pieces of the lining together before she puts the lining in the coat. That's a quick method, but it doesn't insure such a good fit as the piece-by-piece method does.

The back is the first piece to go in. I should have said "go on", for the coat is inside out and you are pinning the lining on it. Before you pin the back on, baste and press a generous pleat all the way down the center. This will provide freedom of movement and save strain on the seams. Secure this pleat with cross-stitches a few inches from the top of the neck, and at the waistline. Pin the back in smoothly. Be sure it fits everywhere--doesn't draw here or hang loose there. When you have it carefully pinned, tack it to side seams of the coat and then to the armhole.

The front sections go on next. Fit and pin. Tack to the shoulder seam of the coat. Then turn under at the side seams; press along the fold that is turned under; and fell by hand side seams, armholes, and front facings. Then turn under and fell the neck and shoulder of the back.

The sleeves go on last. You can make the seam in each sleeve before you slip it over the coat sleeves. Fit and pin. Then hand-fell around the armholes.

Now, you see, your lining is all attached except at the lower sleeve edges and the hems. Hand-fell at the wrist, allowing about an inch in extra length which is simply pinned in as a fold to allow for shrinkage.

About the lower edge--down there around the bottom hem of your coat: Whether you sew the lower edge of the lining to the coat or finish it with a hem and let it hang separately depends on how nicely the coat is finished around the bottom. If it has a neat ribbon-finished hem, leave the lining hanging loose. Hold in place at side seams with French tacks. But if the hem is not neatly finished, turn in and tack the lining along the seam stitching. Allow a half-inch fold along the bottom so the lining will not pull and spoil the hang of the coat.

